

September 20, 2007

City of Trinidad, City Council

Dear Council Members,

We the members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board respectfully submit this
“2007 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Report”.

The following items have been included with this report:

- Summary of Activities
- Priority List for individual parks
- Report on Trails, Linear Parks and Open Space
- Recommendation for a Park Naming Policy

This report respectfully submitted,

Carol Cometto

Nathan Eden

Dan Nuschy

Pat Patrick

Stephan Paulman

Sarah Ruybalid

David Santistevan Jr.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members

Dated _____.

2007 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Report

The work performed for this calendar year include items that were brought before the committee by members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and a priority list as requested by City Council.

One of the items undertaken was to create an urban forest subcommittee to start addressing some of the many needs with the City's trees. The subcommittee put together a workshop for the community, including City personnel, to help train people on the proper ways to maintain their trees in a healthy and sustaining manner. The subcommittee is also planning a tree inventory project.

The next item was the recommendation for the creation of a Trail and Open Space Master Plan. As is common in other areas, a separate Master Plan is developed specifically to address the trails and the open space within a community. This recommendation is detailed in Addendum A attached hereto.

Another item discussed was the continued desire to expand the placement of bear proof trash containers within the Parks system. These containers have been proven to be both cost effective and convenient in the long run when compared to traditional trash receptacles. With reduced incidents of wildlife related cleanup and with decreased contact between wildlife and humans because of these bear proof containers, the benefits of these containers have warranted a recommendation that these types of containers be expanded so as to eventually include every park within the city.

One item that seemed to be at the forefront is the graffiti issue. The results of this activity detract from the beauty of the parks and recreation system, and create an increased burden on the staff. Some ideas to help with prevention included increasing patrols along areas seemingly hardest hit and installing video cameras especially in areas where new park improvements have been made, specifically along the river walk and near the new Jay Cimino Memorial Park. Other ideas include the use of soda-blast equipment for removal of graffiti.

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board also recommend that the City could look into creating a policy for naming parks and park facilities. Some ideas for the proposed policy are included in Addendum B attached hereto.

Priority List for individual Parks

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board compiled a recommended priority list for the parks system. One park from each of the size-based categories was chosen, with the criteria being the parks that seemed to be the most in need. The list is as follows:

- ***Mini Park - Denver Street Playground.*** This park is located in a neighborhood that is presently lacking in parks, and improvements to this park should be a high priority. The general condition of the present park is not of the standard of other parks in the City's parks and recreation system.
- ***Neighborhood Park - Los Ninos Soccer Complex.*** This park is lacking in a few items needed that would make this park complete. Items include restroom facilities, adequate off street parking, and handicap accessibility to the park.
- ***Community Park – Central Park.*** While this park is generally in good shape, a few items, including year around accessible restrooms, additional off-street parking and crosswalks for the lower fields and additional fencing adjacent to the railroad tracks. In the fall months the park is used for youth football programs, and a lack of heating within the restrooms causes the facilities to have to be closed. This then leads to the next concern that the perimeter of the park is not properly enclosed adjacent to the railroad tracks. The lack of restrooms combined with the lack of fencing leads many youths to wander onto the Railroad right of way resulting in a safety concern that should be addressed. We also support the future projects planned regarding the restoration of the pond located within Central Park.
- ***Trails and Open Space*** – The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board recommends that a complete Trails and Open Space Master Plan be developed to address the present and future concerns of the trails and open space system.

Addendum A to the 2007 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Report

Trails, linear parks and open space plan

Trails in Trinidad are meant to serve many roles. They provide recreational opportunities for children, adults, residents, and visitors. Walkers, joggers, bikers, rollerbladers, skateboards, and scooters use trails.

And yet there is much to be done. Trail use in the Trinidad area will continue to grow as even more residents and visitors pursue cycling, strolling, hiking, rollerblading, and running. Commuter use of trails will also grow as an alternative as traffic increases in the region. At the same time, Trinidad's trail system is far from complete or even continuous. There are numerous "missing links". Lastly, the usage and extent of the system have reached the point that increased attention now needs to be turned to trail management – priorities, policies and standards regarding design, maintenance, and general stewardship responsibilities.

A Trail, Linear Park and Open Space Master Plan could be put in place to provide a vision of both existing and proposed trail infrastructure, while establishing a framework for prioritization of trail activity. The Plan will enable trails to be incorporated into the early planning of public and private developments and will help reduce the cost of trail development by identifying least-cost alignments and avoiding lost opportunities. The Trails Master Plan could also provide guidance for trail implementation by outlining trail construction standards, trail management policies and strategies for trail acquisition and maintenance. The Trails Master Plan could also be an element of Trinidad Comprehensive Plan.

Existing Trails Overview

Trinidad's present trail system consists of 4 miles of trails. 2 miles of paved trails are along the Purgatoire River Walk, 1.5 paved miles around the perimeter of Central Park, and 0.5 miles of sidewalk along Santa Fe Trail from Main Street heading south. Many persons use the system on a year around basis.

Future plans for the Trails system include extending the existing Purgatoire Riverwalk Trail west along Interstate 25 as part of the reconstruction work being undertaken, and in conceptual stages is the extension of the East side of the Purgatoire Riverwalk to tie into the Cougar Canyon subdivision.

Recommendations for the Proposed Trails Master Plan

A trail master plan should consist of many elements including prioritizing future routes, design, planning and maintenance standards, and general stewardship responsibilities. Some proposed elements that could be included in a Trail Master Plan are summarized below.

Prioritizing Future Routes

Some parks could be tied into the existing Trail System. Below is a table of existing parks and their approximate distance in miles to the existing trail system.

Southside Park Complex	1.00
Kit Carson Park	0.50
Los Ninos Soccer Complex	0.25
Central Park	0.50
9 th and Portland Park	0.75

Other possible expansions of the trial routes include extending a trail system into Prospect Canyon, Hospital Arroyo to the Ave Maria Shrine, along the North Side Arroyo to Simpson's Rest, and extending to the Trinidad Lake State Park.

Design and Planning Standards

Trail design and planning are elements that should be complementary. Every step of the process should be done with certain policies in place to ensure that the trails are compatible and pleasing for the user, minimize maintenance, and to coexist with the natural environment.

Some proposed design concepts that can be included are:

1. Maintenance of adequate sight distances around horizontal and vertical curves (Meet AASHTO standards for bicycle paths when feasible)
2. Yield or stop signs at congested trail intersections
3. Centerline striping where poor sight distances exist and on narrow bridges and underpasses
4. Gentle trail grades to minimize unsafe downhill speeds
5. Adequate trail widths to accommodate anticipated user volumes
6. Appropriate surfacing depending on both the volume and types of proposed use for that portion of the trail.
7. Amenities adjacent to the trail including retaining walls, railing, fencing, trees, landscaping and lighting are all elements that should be incorporated into the trail design process.

Planning elements that could be included are as follows:

1. The City could pursue creative methods of trail easement acquisition and strive to work with willing property owners when acquiring trail easements.
2. When developing trails through residential neighborhoods efforts will be made to maintain the privacy of existing residences.
3. In all utility line and road construction projects the City could incorporate trails when a strategic need for a trail exists along the project right of way.
4. The City can attempt to protect trail corridors for future trail alignments through acquisition or other appropriate actions such as by easement acquisition through dedication or purchase during the City's subdivision and development review process.

Another method is the establishment of adequate building setbacks for new structures during the subdivision, development review and building permitting process.

5. The City can continue to monitor trail safety conditions, including regular inventories of trail and bridge conditions to assist in the identification of safety improvements and the development of maintenance schedules.

6. Bicycle and pedestrian traffic will be segregated where appropriate and physically feasible.

7. The City can place a high priority on obtaining and protecting a corridor for trails and greenways along the Purgatoire River and work with property owners along the Purgatoire River to incorporate trail easements and dedications in new development wherever feasible.

8. The City can place a high priority on preservation of key parcels for trail segments where public river access is important to recreational uses of the river.

9. The City can encourage land dedications for trail construction in the development review process.

10. The City can maintain public ownership of public lands along the Purgatoire River.

11. The City could develop loop trail opportunities along the Purgatoire River Greenway.

12. The City could develop trail opportunities from Trinidad to adjacent and surrounding mesas, ridges and parks.

13. The City can require new development to provide trail linkages to public lands nearby. Natural features such as drainages and ridges shall be the preferred alignments for these trail segments.

14. Property along drainages is appropriate for greenway and trail development so long as compatible with protection of viable wildlife habitats.

Conclusion

The existing trail system is an excellent start, but with the City's continued growth the trails system could be an incorporating factor for many different parks and recreation elements. Creating a complete and in depth master plan regarding the trail, linear park and open space system could be a method for insuring the proper execution of the present and future trail system.

Addendum B to the 2007 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Report

Recommendation for Creating a Park Naming Policy

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board recommends that city council create an equitable policy for naming Parks, Buildings and Facilities located within parks. We are recommending that the following items be taken into consideration in creating the new policy:

- Names submitted for individuals (living or deceased) should be those who have contributed greatly to the community or appropriate to the function of the facility to be named.
- Names nominated should not be those who have been overly recognized previously.
- Names, if possible, should have geographic, topographic, historical or individual significance, generally known throughout the area or when a contributor has made a significant financial contribution towards the development of the facility.
- Where consideration for naming involves geographical, topographical or historical connotations, help should be solicited from historical societies or other groups having knowledge of this area.
- A part of the selection process may include, where desirable, a contest or competition involving the entire City in order to obtain suggestions for names to stimulate public interest.
- Only one City park, or any building, diamond or facility located within a city park, will be named for any one person/entity.
- Those City parks, buildings or other facilities already named shall not be subject to renaming as a result of a financial contribution.
- To avoid duplication and impropriety, all proposed names must be submitted in writing to the Department of Parks and Recreation, who will be responsible to keep a current master list of names.
- The final decision rests with City Council.